

# HOW TO CONDUCT A SELF-ASSESSMENT



## Your Online Presence

One of the easiest ways for people (e.g. potential employers, criminals, etc.) to get information about you is through your existing online presence. There, they can learn about you with just a few clicks of the mouse and a quick Internet search. It is therefore important for you to know just what is out there publicly available about you, and how you might reduce any unwanted information.

Review your social media accounts and available data aggregator websites to determine what, if any negative or unwanted information is out there about you. Remember, your close contacts, including family members may have also, unintentionally exposed information about you. It is important to also review what others may have posted about you especially if you have been tagged, directly linking you to a post and making you much easier to find.

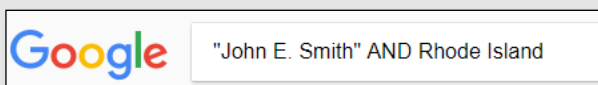
## Search Engines

Search yourself using various search engines such as Google, DuckDuckGo, etc. for the differences and benefits of each (for a few examples of popular search engines please see the third page). Please note that Google appears to yield the most accurate results for people searches and captures more relevant information.

Prior to researching, ensure you are not logged into any of the search engine sites such as Google or Yahoo. Be sure to delete your browser history and clear cookies before you begin and when you have completed all your research.

These next instructions are related to the Google search engine, but can be applied to most other search engines.

Start with basic personal information such as First and Last Name. If you have a common name, you may want to search First, Middle, and Last Name, or your name associated with a City and State, Home Address, or an associated organization. Please see the examples below:



## Search Engines Continued...

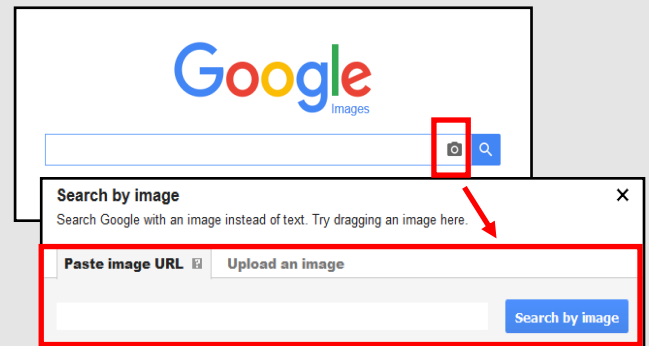
Please note that search terms **within quotations marks " "** will yield results that have the same terms in the **same order** as the ones inside the quotes. So "John Edward Smith" will not necessarily return the same results as "Edward, John Smith."

Google does support Boolean logic, however you might, instead decide to use its own search operators which can be found here: <https://support.google.com/websearch/answer/2466433?hl=en>

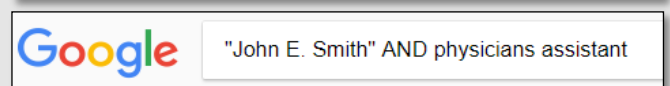
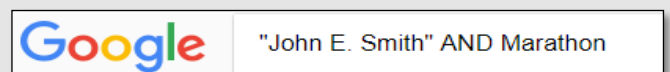
You will also want to search your email addresses, usernames, and phone numbers within quotation marks.

If your search results continue to include items that are not relevant, use the **dash sign** to **exclude** certain search terms like this: "John Smith" -Pocahontas

You may want to conduct an image search on any photos you have used as profile pictures on social media accounts or posted to other places online. The reason for this is to ensure that advertisers and/or any other company or individual hasn't taken your picture for their own personal use. To conduct an image search using Google, go to **images.google.com**, click the camera icon, then select Upload an image. Select the image you want to use to start your search.



Collectively the search engine results will give you an idea of the information that can be quickly collected on you. For example, you may have found and information about previous work experience, hobbies (e.g. races, sporting events), or schools (e.g. graduation announcement). Use that information to conduct further searches such as:



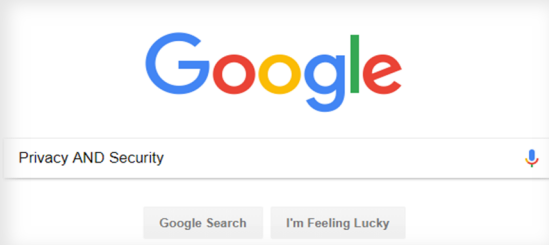
# HOW TO CONDUCT A SELF-ASSESSMENT



## Boolean Match Logic

Boolean Search is a way to organize your search using a combination of keywords and the three main Boolean operators (AND, OR and NOT), to produce more accurate and more relevant results.<sup>(1)</sup>

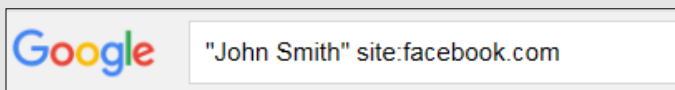
- a) AND
- b) OR
- c) NOT
- d) " "
- e) ( )



## Social Media Search

Take an inventory of the social media accounts that you currently maintain. Some examples include, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.

First, without being logged in to any social media accounts, conduct open source searches on yourself to see what is viewable to the public. Remember, if your social media accounts don't show up during your open source searches that doesn't mean your account is completely private. It's important to check out the smartcards to help you lock down your accounts to your own personal satisfaction.



Next, login to those accounts and thoroughly review your profile for sensitive information and consider removing unnecessary data:

- ◆ Review your profile to see what data is available to the public (address, employment, phone number, etc.)
- ◆ Check any photos that you have posted or have been tagged in (this can be done through your Activity Log if using Facebook)

\* See Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn Smart Cards to learn how to properly set privacy settings.

## People Finder Open Source/Fee

### Required Sites

Conduct searches on various data aggregator sites.

Examples include:

- ◆ [www.ussearch.com](http://www.ussearch.com)
- ◆ [www.spokeo.com](http://www.spokeo.com)
- ◆ [www.beenverified.com](http://www.beenverified.com)
- ◆ [www.intelius.com](http://www.intelius.com)
- ◆ [www.radaris.com](http://www.radaris.com)

You can conduct an initial search for free, but all of these sites require payment to access a full report. These sites require no special authorities; anyone with Internet access and a credit card can purchase reports, so it is a good idea to be familiar with the information that can be discovered through them.

If you find information that you do not want publicly available in any of the reports, contact the organization to request that your information be opted out.

Once you've opted out of or suppressed any sensitive information you have found, consider setting up Google Alerts so that you're notified if the information reappears.

## Relatives

Though you may have found most of your information conducting your individual search, it might be a good idea to conduct a light search on friends and family members. Remember, they may have posted information about you that an adversary may be able to access.

- ◆ Ensure nothing posted on any of the accounts indicates or outright displays personal information you don't want discovered.
- ◆ Ask immediate family members (spouse, children, etc.) to review their account settings and postings to ensure that they have not inadvertently posted personal information about you or themselves.
- ◆ Provide family and friends with copies of our Smartbook or Smart Cards to help them with locking down their accounts and devices.

# HOW TO CONDUCT A SELF-ASSESSMENT



## Examples of Common Search Engines

### **www.google.com**

Google is a search engine that specializes in Internet-related services and products. These include online advertising technologies, search, cloud computing, and software. The majority of its profits are derived from AdWords, an online advertising service that places advertisements near the list of search results.

### **www.bing.com**

Bing is the second largest search engine in the U.S. Searches conducted using Bing generally yield similar results to Google, however Bing's image search capability (<https://www.bing.com/images>) is considered superior by most.

### **www.duckduckgo.com**

DuckDuckGo is a search engine that distinguishes itself from other search engines by not profiling its users and by deliberately showing all users the same search results for a given search term. Does not store or compile any of your data to include searched data or personal information (meaning it will not learn from your searches in the same way that Google will). DuckDuckGo emphasizes getting information from the best sources rather than the most sources, generating its search results from key crowdsourced sites such as Wikipedia and from partnerships with other search engines like Yandex, Yahoo!, Bing, and Yummly.

### **www.searx.me**

Searx is a metasearch engine, aggregating the results of other search engines while not storing information about its users.<sup>(2)</sup>

### **<https://archive.org>**

The Internet Archive is an American digital library with the stated mission of "universal access to all knowledge." It provides free access to collections of digitized materials, including but not limited to; websites, software applications, music, videos, moving images, and millions of public-domain books.

## Examples of Common Social Media Sites

- [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)
- [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)
- [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com)
- [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)
- [www.tumblr.com](http://www.tumblr.com)
- [www.classmates.com](http://www.classmates.com)
- [www.instagram.com](http://www.instagram.com)
- [www.vk.com](http://www.vk.com)
- [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)
- [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)
- [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com)
- [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)
- [www.snapchat.com](http://www.snapchat.com)
- [www.reddit.com](http://www.reddit.com)
- [www.tiktok.com](http://www.tiktok.com)

## Additional Examples of People Finder Open Source/Fee Required Sites

- ◆ [www.truthfinder.com](http://www.truthfinder.com)
- ◆ [www.findpeoplesearch.com](http://www.findpeoplesearch.com)
- ◆ [www.privateeye.com](http://www.privateeye.com)
- ◆ [www.peoplefinders.com](http://www.peoplefinders.com)
- ◆ [www.usa-people-search.com](http://www.usa-people-search.com)
- ◆ [www.spokeo.com](http://www.spokeo.com)
- ◆ [www.locateplus.com](http://www.locateplus.com)
- ◆ [www.peakyou.com](http://www.peakyou.com)
- ◆ [www.thatsthem.com](http://www.thatsthem.com)
- ◆ [www.familytree.com](http://www.familytree.com)
- ◆ [www.instantcheckmate.com](http://www.instantcheckmate.com)
- ◆ [www.zabasearch.com](http://www.zabasearch.com)
- ◆ [www.peoplelookup.com](http://www.peoplelookup.com)
- ◆ [www.publicrecords.com](http://www.publicrecords.com)
- ◆ [www.whitepages.com](http://www.whitepages.com)
- ◆ [www.reversegenie.com](http://www.reversegenie.com)
- ◆ [www.yasni.com](http://www.yasni.com)
- ◆ [www.social-searcher.com](http://www.social-searcher.com)
- ◆ [www.infospace.com](http://www.infospace.com)
- ◆ [www.lullar.com](http://www.lullar.com)
- ◆ [www.publicrecordsnow.com](http://www.publicrecordsnow.com)
- ◆ [www.findoutthetruth.com](http://www.findoutthetruth.com)
- ◆ [www.truepeoplesearch.com](http://www.truepeoplesearch.com)
- ◆ [www.checkpeople.com](http://www.checkpeople.com)
- ◆ [www.peoplelooker.com](http://www.peoplelooker.com)
- ◆ [www.persopo.com](http://www.persopo.com)
- ◆ [www.peoplefinder.com](http://www.peoplefinder.com)
- ◆ <https://carsowners.net>
- ◆ <https://allpeople.com>